R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 014 642 AC 001 543

TRAINING THE NONPROFESSIONAL.

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PUB DATE JAN 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.84 19P.

DESCRIPTORS- *SUBPROFESSIONALS, *ON THE JOB TRAINING, *WORK STUDY PROGRAMS, *INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION, *TRAINERS, MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATIONAL MOBILITY, SUPERVISORY TRAINING, INSERVICE EDUCATION, PRESERVICE EDUCATION, TRAINING TECHNIQUES, MOTIVATION, JOB SKILLS, SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS, CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, ADULT LEARNING, COMMUNITY SERVICES, INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION, GROUP INSTRUCTION, ANXIETY, INDIGENOUS PERSONNEL, PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS,

INCREASINGLY, PROPOSALS ARE EMERGING FOR THE LARGE SCALE EMPLOYMENT OF NONPROFESSIONALS IN THE HUMAN SERVICES WHERE INEXPERIENCED PEOPLE LEARN TO PERFORM JOBS (IN SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND SERVICE AGENCIES) NORMALLY ALLOTED TO PROFESSIONALS. IN THE CONCEPT OF JOBS FIRST, TRAINING BUILT IN, ENTRY JOBS BECOME THE MOTIVATORS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE NON PROFESSIONAL. IF THE NEW CAREERS MOVEMENT IS TO GROW, IF THE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE IS TO BE OPENED UP SO THAT JOBS CAN BECOME CAREERS AND AIDES CAN RISE TO BECOME PROFESSIONALS, MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES MUST TAKE PLACE AND LARGE NUMBERS OF TRAINERS MUST BE RECRUITED AND TRAINED. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT TRAINERS BE RECRUITED FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, SUCH AS PEACE CORPS RETURNEES, AND COLLEGE GRADUATES, AND THAT TRADITIONAL CREDENTIALS BE WAIVED EXCEPT FOR THE SMALL GROUP OF SENIOR TRAINERS (TRAINERS OF TRAINERS). NONPROFESSIONALS AND THEIR TRAINERS WOULD BE TRAINED SIMULTANEOUSLY, ON THE JOB, THUS PROVIDING IMMEDIATE WORK OUTPUT WHILE DEVELOPING TRAINING CADRES. PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING THE NONPROFESSIONALS INCLUDE--(1) FIELD-BASED TRAINING PRECEDED BY SHORT PRE-SERVICE TRAINING, (2) SYSTEMATIC IN-SERVICE TRAINING RELATED TO JOB EXPERIENCE, PLANNED SO THAT SUCCESS IN LEARNING SKILLS IS GUARANTEED FOR AIDES AT EACH PHASE, AND (3) TEAM OR GROUP TRAINING, INCLUDING GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND MODIFIED SENSITIVITY TRAINING. (AJ)

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Training the Nonprofessional

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PAPER

January, 1967

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Jobs First - Training Built In

The New Careers concept suggests that jobs normally alloted to highly trained professionals or technicians can, if they are broken down properly, be performed by inexperienced, untrained people. These initial jobs form the entry position. The notion is jobs first, training built in; that is, the job becomes the motivator for further development on the part of the nonprofessional.

The idea is to provide people with employment first and diplomas later and to introduce training while the workers are on the job, with concomitant college courses provided largely at the job base. This concept is directly opposite to one of the most popular ideas in America, namely that one has to obtain long years of education before he can perform a meaningful job. The New Careers concept stresses instead that the job be provided initially and that training, upgrading and added education be built in. It is possible to begin, for example, as a teacher's aide and while obtaining courses on the job, in the evening, and during the summer, to rise within a short period of time to become an assistant teacher, than an emergency teacher (or associate teacher) and ultimately a fully licensed professional teacher. In a plan* being developed by Scientific Resources Incorporated for the Newark School System it is proposed that individuals with less than a high school education go through these steps while working full time, obtaining an entry salary of approximately $ 4,000 per year and becoming full fledged teachers in five to six years.

✓ * Copies of the Newark Plan may be obtained from Scientific Resources Incorporated, 1191 MOrris Avenue, Union, New Jersey 07083.

If the New Careers movement is to grow, if the opportunity structure is to be opened up so that jobs can become careers and aides can rise to become ultimately professionals, major institutional changes will have to be considered: Civil Service requirements will have to be altered, educational institutions will have to accredit on-the-job training, and enormous new training cadres will have to be developed from among both professionals and sub-professionals.

The significance of training has not been fully grasped. No national training institute has been established, although it is needed. No national plan exists for training of trainers, nor for retraining of professionals to work effectively with nonprofessionals. If the nonprofessional revolution is to create more than jobs, if it is to develop genuine careers for the poor, moving them up the ladder, step by step, authentic training is the key. Trainers must be trained in how to evaluate nonprofessionals; how to encourage participation; how to listen; how to supervise in new ways; how to provide functional on-the-job learning.

The traditional principle that long periods of training are necessary before an individual can be employed, must be reversed; the motto should be "Jobs First--Training Built In." Nonprofessional human service positions can begin with on-the-job training. Nonprofessionals learn essentially from doing plus systematic in-service training which can be phased-in functionally as needed on the job.

The Need for a Large Number of Trainers

Increasingly, proposals are emerging for the large scale employment of non-professionals in the United States.* One of the major obstacles to the

* President Johnson's Commission on Technology, Automation and Economic Programs proposed 500,000 such full time jobs.

development of such programs as well as the fulfillment of the programs already in existence is the scarcity of trainers and supervisors to work with nonprofessionals. In other words, there is a major need for the training of trainers. If one million nonprofessionals are to be employed, at least 50,000 training and supervisory personnel will probably be required. It is clear that while the New Careers movement may potentially reduce certain manpower shortages in the human service fields, it is also developing new shortages of a specialized kind of manpower, namely trainers.

Thus far there has been little realization that the recruitment of traditional credentialed personnel to fill these new training roles is extremely difficult. There simply are not enough available social workers, psychologists, etc., interested in developing a new career line in the anti-poverty programs as supervisory personnel. Any program directed toward the training of trainers must consider this recruitment problem from the beginning and plan for it appropriately.

Americans for Democratic Action, at its 1966 convention, proposed that 5 million of these jobs be created in public services. Included in their list were police aides, recreation aides, homemakers, welfare aides, code enforcement inspectors. Congress has enacted the Scheuer-Nelson Sub-professional Career Act which will appropriate approximately $ 70 million to employ and train untrained, unemployed people in these needed jobs.

Already in the United States there are probably close to 50,000 of these new nonprofessionals, most of the jobs having been created by the anti-poverty legislation. Most estimates indicate that 25,000 such full time human service positions were produced for "indigenous" nonprofessionals by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Probably another 25,000 or more part time pre-school aides have been employed through Operation Headstart, and presently through

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act some 40,000 teacher aides will be employed. Medicare will involve many thousands more as Home Health aides.

Fortunately, there are a number of recruitment reservoirs or pools which can be drawn upon, provided the training positions can be redefined at various levels. There is no question that there is a need for a cadre of top level Senior Trainers (trainers of trainers) who might be recruited from existing social work sources and re-tooled rapidly. These people should be paid high salaries and given considerable status (e.g. university appointments).

But the main training personnel cannot be recruited at this level and thus a re-definition of credentials is required. A new type of trainer who does not possess traditional credentials must be recruited.

These training personnel can be recruited from among the following sources: peace corps returnees, college graduates with no specialized training, people with administrative and business experience who are interested in a new career, sub-professional workers, such as welfare department employees, youth workers, and a top layer of existing nonprofessionals. In other words, people must be selected who do not have traditional credentials but do have administrative skill, know-how, inter-personal skills and who, on the basis of careful selection procedures, evidence trainability for this new position.

It is clear that these non-credentialed trainers will require much more than traditional personnel who might simply have to be re-tooled and taught how to extend their skills with modification to the supervision of nonprofessional personnel.*

* It is unlikely that these non-credentialed trainer candidates will initially be able to train nonprofessionals independent of supervision but rather they will have to be supervised for some period of time in the field by the credentialed Senior Trainers.

This new type of trainer cannot be assumed to possess systematic knowledge of the urban community, or knowledge of supervisory practice and theory. A social training program dealing with these areas must be planned, possibly utilizing existing university courses which could be patterned to provide a basic core of training. In addition, special intensive seminars should be prepared to focus the knowledge and understanding requisite for these trainers. The seminars would be concerned with substantative theory as well as field problems relating to supervision, etc.

The Training of Senior Trainers (Trainer of Trainers)

If nonprofessionals are to be employed and trained with any degree of speed, a plan must be conceived to train the Senior Trainers as well; that is, people who will be capable of doing the training of trainers. In light of the increasing likelihood that large numbers of nonprofessionals will be fielded fairly rapidly within the next two or three years, the strategic problem would seem to be the recruitment and development of these Senior Trainers.

Ultimately, Senior Trainers may be recruited from the ranks of trainers who in turn have been recruited from among non-credentialed personnel including sub-professionals and nonprofessionals themselves. Initially, however, this is unlikely. The first group of Senior Trainers should have had considerable supervision related experience either as social workers, educators, psychologists, home economists, nurses, etc. These should be people who have skill not only in supervision, but in the imparting of supervisory skills. The Senior Trainers should not be trained in basic educational and supervisory techniques, but rather should be assisted to modify and enlarge their technology. Thus they must be flexible, sensitive people who do not rigidly adhere to their traditional techniques/ They must be people in search of new careers, growth and development, challenge and excitement. Their training should include

social science concepts, social technology, methods of developing training laboratories and a full analysis of the types of human service programs likely to be utilizing nonprofessionals.

They should be trained to train trainers of nonprofessional service agents (such as homemakers, teachers aides, mental health aides); neighborhood workers whose function is to involve the residents of the area in community planning and community action; and expediters whose function is to link services and people more efficiently--to mediate between a client and the public and private agencies. The Senior Trainer should learn how to develop relationships with various public and private agencies in the community, how to make field placements and consult on site training* and how to develop groups.

Specific Nonprofessional Issues

Attention should be given to preparing Senior Trainers to deal with nonprofessional issues such as:

- the ways in which the nonprofessional perceives the professional

    competitively
    as a foreman
    distant from the poor
    possessed of magical powers
    over-identification with professional

- the nonprofessional's uneven development - deficiencies in the areas of

    record keeping
    literacy
    "system" know how

  in other area he may possess excellent understanding

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* Site training is training provided in the field operation in which it will be utilized.

- the various types of nonprofessionals

  those who desire careers
  those who desire security
  those from the hard core poor who may need considerable rehabilitation

- the significance of the buffer role (the Trainer or Assistant Trainer) standing midway between the nonprofessional and the Senior Trainer or other professional (Supervisor, Administrator)

- the ways in which the professional can learn from the nonprofessional (cross socialization)

- the role of the nonprofessional as a change agent in the system

- the marginality and ambiguity of the nonprofessional role

- special issues

  the new participation ideology
  relation to volunteers
  coddling and glamorizing of nonprofessionals
  authority problems of nonprofessionals
  confidentiality issues

It is going to be necessary to have training designs which allow for the confrontation of the nonprofessional and the professional with full open discussion of the difficulties they have with each other or anticipate having with each other. Trainers need to be prepared to handle these potential cleavages and issues in order to work toward the full development of the non-professional-professional team.

Training Methodology

The following principles should guide the training of nonprofessionals:

1. Simultaneous training of nonprofessionals and trainers.
2. Field based or site based training--conceptual, didactic training built on on laboratory-field experiences.

3. Short pre-service training to take place if possible in a "protected" base--e. g. a storefront laboratory.
4. Phased, programed, step-by-step training;
5. Systematic, in-service training related to on-the-job experience--short period or pre-job training.
6. Team or group training.

The actual training technology emphasizes building on the style of the trainee and expanding it; learning through doing, role-playing, job simulation and field exercises; highly explicit, concrete, inductive presentations; peer learning and learning through teaching others (helper principle); task oriented, functional learning; considerable over-training. For more details on training technology and overall training design, see New Careers for the Poor, by Pearl and Riessman.

Phased Training

The relationship of training to job performance for the nonprofessional is more difficult than it is for other types of employees. Perhaps the main reason for this is the general lack of skill possessed by the nonprofessional and more particularly, the lack of certain requisite skills for the new jobs (e.g. interviewing, recordkeeping). The problem is heightened by the ambiguity of the new NP roles.

Before planning a specific training program it is necessary to determine priorities; that is, the minimum knowledge that is needed quickly in order to perform on the job. Every effort should be made to avoid imposing too much information on the NP too quickly, lest we clutter his mind, disorganize him and make him too anxious.

It has become axiomatic that most of the training of the nonprofessional will take place on the job itself. This requires that job functions be phased in slowly and that the Aides receive ample time to master the required tasks at each stage before going on to more advanced tasks. For example, in Phase One of the Lincoln Project*, the Mental Health Aide is expected to know how to do simple expediting; this requires a knowledge of the various agencies and how to contact them, interviewing skills related to obtaining information and placing the client at ease, knowing how to give information and judging when to request supervision and assistance. In the Second Phase of the Lincoln Project, nonprofessionals are expected to learn how to conduct meetings and develop groups, committees and campaigns e.g. (voter registration). They are also expected to improve their expediting and interviewing skills, to become more proficient at observing and assessing behavior, and judge when information is relevant and important and to deepen their skills in recording, filing and report writing. In a later phase they are expected to develop organizational skills, learn how to spot volunteers and develop leadership, to do some simple counseling and to develop and deepen their group skills.

The Pre-Job Stage

Pre-job training (to be distinguished from core training or the training in basic knowledge which can take place throughout the job program), should be oriented primarily to enabling the NP to perform the simplest entry features of the job in a fairly adequate fashion. Moreover, the job itself must be broken down and phased in, so that in the initial stage the nonprofessional will be required to perform only limited aspects of the job itself. Thus in interviewing a client who has been having difficulty obtaining welfare, the

* This is the Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Service Mental Health Aide Program.

Aide must know the simplest principles of interviewing (how to obtain information), how to contact the Welfare Department to inform them of the situation, and how to make a simple reocrd of this transaction - following forms which should be especially developed for this purpose. The nonprofessional should not be expected to assess or evaluate why the client hasn't appeared for welfare before, what his other problems may be, how to plan to assist the client in a general way, or how to influence a resistant welfare investigator. These skills will be learned on the job itself, through on-the-job training and specialized systematic training to be introduced at a later point. Hence the pre-service training is directed toward developing primary skills, agency orientation, and providing considerable support and structure.

Aside from providing general orientation regarding the agency and its stance and goals, the pre-service period should teach quite directly, in non-didatic fashion, the necessary preliminary skills. This can be done through the use of cases, role playing, anecdotes, job simulation. Role playing, interviewing of a client, phoning an agency, making a home visit, talking to a supervisor are illustrative here. Particular attention must be given to teaching simple recording skills because these are most lacking in the population in question.

The pre-service period should be short lest anxiety be built up and the Aide become threatened by the anticipated job. the learning should be active; the Aide should be doing things and knowledge and concepts should be brought in around the discussion of his activities.

As quickly as possible the Aide should be placed on the job itself for a part of the day under close professional supervision. The sooner the Aides can get their feet wet, the better they will feel. Thus in the Lincoln Project, the Aides were placed on the job in a Neighborhood Service Center for one-half

a day in this pre-job period (after a three week period (after a three week period spent in job simulation, practice, etc.) The half day in which they were not working was utilized to discuss the specific experiences they were having.

Beyond this point, the really significant training and learning will occur on the job itself and in carefully planned discussion about the work they are doing. It is not to be assumed, unlike many other positions, that the NP knows his job; for the NP is actually involved in continuous training and the first job operations are really to be considered preliminary aspects of the position that he will ultimately fulfill. he is really still in training on the job itself.

On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training then, becomes decisive and different types of on-the-job training should be considered. The Aides will learn from simply performing some of the tasks, - that is, they will learn from their own experience; the Aides will learn from each other (utilizing peer learning); the Aides will learn from their supervisor who will support them and correct their mistakes and provide assistance at any time on request. The Aides will also learn from a special series of group meetings that can be held. One such group can be concerned with systematic training introducing, for example, further skill in interviewing. There can also be group discussions about general problems being experienced: on the job problems with professionals, problems with other agencies, problems about their own marginality, problems stemming from competition with each other or annoyance with the type of supervision they are receiving. These discussions should be task centered with personality and individual components coming in as relevant (the traditional sensitivity training, T group, experience- seems to require considerable modification if it is to be used with the nonprofessional population.)

Another very significant type of informal training can be developed as the program of the agency moves forward. In the Lincoln Project, the intial phase was concerned with providing and expediting service. After a number of months, the program moved toward the development of groups, committees, community action, campaigns (voter registration, etc.). At this point the program had to be discussed with the Aides and this provided an excellent opportunity for the introduction of new training with regard to concepts and skills. Thus in order to involve clients in a community meeting, it was necessary to discuss with the Aides plans for calling such a meeting, how to conduct the meeting, how to bring the client population to the meeting, how to develop committees and so on.

The need for the new skills is introduced as the initial tasks are mastered and the program moves forward. The new skills are introduced functionally. At the point when the agency is ready to call a community meeting the need for skills related to conducting the meeting is likely to be highest.

The discussion, which was program centered, for the most part, brought in training in what might be described as an informal but highly functional fashion. <u>But it is exactly in this fashion that the Aides seemed to learn best</u>. They needed to know how to conduct a meeting, develop participation in committees and the like and consequently their motivation was high and the learning was sensitive and highly directed. Moreover, issues about how fast we can move, what kinds of action can we take, what is our relationship to the community became commonplace discussion and the concepts and goals of the program were easily introduced in this context. For example, one of the Aides asked why we couldn't use an Alinsky type, TWO program approach. Other Aides suggested that if we did, we wouldn't have our jobs long. The leader indicated that there

were target populations among the poor whom the Alinsky groups did not influence easily but that our agency becasue of its legitimacy might be able to work with and involve in various types of non-militant activity. A great deal of excited discussion took place and apparently much concrete understanding regarding the the agency's viewpoint emerged.

To take another example: At one of the community meetings that was called where over 100 people from the neighborhood attended, the combined enthusiasm of the Aides who led the meeting and the client-citzens who attended it, went into the formation fo eight different committees. In a discussion after the meeting the Aides were able to understand fairly easily that they had really run ahead of themselves; that they had taken on more work than the agency could handle. Various methods for consolidating the committees and developing volunteers were then discussed in a highly meaningful fashion. Thus the fact that the programs of the new Neighborhood Service Centers are not fully developed can be used to good advantage in the phasing of the training of the nonprofessionals. As these programs develop, new training appropriate to the program phase can be introduced and this is a most meaningful way for the Aides to learn.

The Howard Program provides another illustration of functional learning. Initially the Research Aides in the Howard Program interviewed each other with a tape recorder and learned only the simplest principles of interviewing in order to perform this task. Before long they recognized that they needed to know something about how to record this information and categorize it and later they needed some statistics in order to analyze it appropriately. As each of these needs became apparent, the appropriate training was introduced to develop the requisite skills. This can be done either formally or informally,

through systematic in-service training and/or through informal discussions related to the problem. Similarly in conducting a voter registration drive, at the Lincoln Project, the community organizer taught the Aides a number of organizational skills and attitudes quite informally in the process of working on the drive. This type of step-by-step learning, emerging out of the job needs, provides highly effective motivation for indigneous nonprofessionals. In fact, one of the most interesting sidelights connected to it, is that the NP's do not even realize that they are receiving training!

To repeat: the task phasing has to be very carefully planned so that success in learning the requisite skills is guaranteed for the Aide at each point or phase. If too much is required too early, the nonprofessional will experience the type of failure that he has experienced so many times before in school and in life.

Some Suggestions

1. Provide constant support for the nonprofessional; be available for assistance at all times and make it clear that the NP can request it without any negative implications regarding his evaluation. On the other hand, provide the opportunity for considerable initiative and flexibility on the part of the NP. He wants both the flexibility and the support. He is a new kind of employee, and reflecting the developing anti-poverty idealogy, he wants more of a say, or at least wants to be consulted, regarding the operation of various programs and rules.

2. Non-professionals frequently expect magic from the training process; that is they expect to learn how to do everything they are supposed to do quite perfectly. To the degree that this is not achieved they blame the training process. To some extent this reflects a naive view about training, education and learning.

The training staff should be aware that it probably will receive this reaction and insofar as possible should try to explain to the trainees that many dimensions of the job will take some time to learn fully in practice. Fundamentally, of course, the trainee's reaction reflects their anxiety about the new job and role and this has to be dealt with in other ways as indicated below. Trainers also sometimes expect too much from the training; sometimes their expectations of nonprofessionals are initially too high and their appraisal of adequate progress is based on experience with more trained, experienced professional learners. While NP's have some suprising knowledge and understanding of a variety of issues, there are some areas of their knowledge which are unbelievably remiss. They often have great gaps in their knowledge or know-how about the system--how to fill out forms, how to make outlines, how to take tests, how to read effectively. Because they are frequently very sensitive and bright in their understanding of people and the neighborhood, the tendency (in halo fashion) is to assume that their understanding is equally good in areas removed from their previous experience. Thus it is a shock to discover that a nonprofessional who has conducted an excellent interview with a client, records it inadequately. Constant training and emphasis must be built in to improve the report writing skills, filling out of forms, etc.

3. Nonprofessionals have quickly learned that part of the idealogy of the anti-poverty movement is directed toward developing, not merely jobs for nonprofessionals, but career lines as well. It is therefore, extremely important that the agency establish these lines so that there can be aides, assistants, associates, supervisory positions available to the nonprofessional. The training staff must clarify these career lines indicating the relationship of education to them and further indicating the time involved before individuals can expect to "move up". If this is not done appropriately, aspirations may develop very rapidly and outstrip possibilities.

4. The Aides should be encouraged as soon as possible to form their own groups or unions which can meet outside of the job. (Who would predict that organization of nonprofessionals will progress fairly rapidly in the coming period.) Aides at Harlem Hospital have been encouraged to meet by themselves, but these meetings have been recorded and utilized by the research staff there. The meetings were carried on within the the context of the job itself, on the premises so to speak. The Aides at the Lincoln Project and the Howard University Aides met independently on their own time and not under the surveillance of their professional supervisors. These groups are probably more significant than any of the groups that are introduced on the job itself in order to increase espirit de corps, teamwork, etc. These on-the-job groups are too much are too much under the control of the professional agency. The off-the-job groups are too much under the control of the professional agency. The off-the-job groups are very important in developing the power of the Aides, a feeling of identification as a group and should contribute greatly to the formation of role identity and job identity.

5. While much emphasis has been placed on the use of group procedures in training, it should be noted that a great deal of deep learning develops on a one-to-one identification basis. Bank Street College's summer experiment in which each teacher worked one hour per day with one student found this one of the most effective learning devices. And Mobilization for Youth's homework helper program in which one high school youngster worked individually with one elementary school youngster, also supports the value of the one-to-one relationship. This principle can be utilized at a number of points in the training design. Individual Aides can be

assigned to professionals in the agency who select themselves for this purpose and volunteer to develop a non-professional assistant. We have also found that it is possible to use experienced, trained non-professionals to assist in one-to-one work with new trainees; that is, for a period during the day a new trainee can be assigned to work alongside of an employed non-professional. When this is done carefully and supervised thoroughly, there exists the possibility of of utilizing the full advantages of peer learning. Many different studies have noted that peers learn from each other in very different ways, and sometimes much more fully, than they learn from "superior" teachers. In addition, the helper principle notes that the peer teacher (that is the more experienced or advanced aide) learns enormously from imparting information to the trainee; that is he learns from teaching.

6. While a certain degree of anxiety is useful in stimulating learning, the NP is probably faced by far too much anxiety due to his role ambiguity. Hence every effort should be made to reduce the anxiety level. This can be achieved by: careful phasing of tasks, (not demanding too much too fast), defining the job as carefully as possible, developing group support, providing specific training and evaluation (positive performance should be commended in as detailed a fashion as are weaknesses) providing constant supervisory support and assistance, and holding frank discussions of program and role difficulties. We suspect that the NP's anxiety tolerance is not high and that a learning style that utilizes anxiety stimulation is not characteristic of this population.

Summary

In order to establish the training capability necessary to train thousands of nonprofessionals, it will be necessary to recruit and train rapidly large numbers of trainers and Senior Trainers (trainers of trainers). It is suggested that the trainers be recruited from a variety of sources and that traditional credentials be waived except for the much smaller group of Senior Trainers. Nonprofessionals and their trainers may be trained simultaneously, on the job, thus providing immediate work output while developing training cadres. Specific issues and methodology involved in the training of non-professionals are discussed and suggestions are offered.

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